

INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS

American Journal of Health Promotion

Editorial Goal

The editorial goal of the *American Journal of Health Promotion* is to provide a forum for exchange among the many disciplines involved in health promotion and an interface between researchers and practitioners. We also publish a newsletter, *The Art of Health Promotion*, that provides practical information to make programs more effective. The newsletter is published as a section of the *American Journal of Health Promotion*.

Definition of Health Promotion

Health Promotion is the art and science of helping people discover the synergies between their core passions and optimal health, enhancing their motivation to strive for optimal health, and supporting them in changing their lifestyle to move toward a state of optimal health. Optimal health is a dynamic balance of physical, emotional, social, spiritual, and intellectual health. Lifestyle change can be facilitated through a combination of learning experiences that enhance awareness, increase motivation, and build skills and, most important, through the creation of opportunities that open access to environments that make positive health practices the easiest choice.

O'Donnell MP. Definition of health promotion 2.0: embracing passion, enhancing motivation, recognizing dynamic balance, and creating opportunities. *Am J Health Promot.* 2009 Jul-Aug;23(6):iv.

Editorial Scope

Manuscripts can be full-length manuscripts or brief reports. Full-length manuscripts take the form of Quantitative Research, Qualitative Research, or Systematic Literature Reviews. Brief reports take the form of Current Issues and Trends or Applied Research Briefs. Articles are published in the following editorial areas:

- Interventions, including emotional health (which includes stress management), intellectual health (which includes mind-body health), physical health (which encompasses fitness, medical self-care, nutrition, smoking control, and weight control), social health, and spiritual health
- Strategies, including awareness programs, behavior change programs, and supportive environment programs such as culture change, health policy, and population health
- Applications, including employee assistance programs, health-promoting community design, and programs for underserved populations
- Research, including issues related to measurement, study design, analysis and sampling, and important results on financial analysis and return on investment

Submission of Manuscripts to *American Journal of Health Promotion*

onlineFirst

In an effort to get important research out to the field faster, the *Journal* publishes all accepted manuscripts online ahead of print. These *onlineFirst* articles are available immediately to all subscribers to the online version of the *American Journal of Health Promotion*. They appear in their final form after being copyedited, typeset, and approved by the author. *onlineFirst* articles are citable by the unique DOI assigned to each article; it should be used in place of volume, issue, page range, and year of publication. Once an article is posted *onlineFirst*, no further revisions will be made until the article is

selected for a specific volume and issue. At that time, the *onlineFirst* version is removed from the site, and the final published version is posted.

Presubmission Inquiry

Authors MUST first submit a Presubmission Inquiry Abstract to the <http://ajhp.alltrack.net> Web site. The abstract will be sent to the Editor who determines if it fits the editorial scope of the *Journal*. If the Editor accepts a Presubmission Inquiry, authors are then invited to submit the full manuscript. Responses with a determination of appropriateness are normally sent within 10 days.

The required parameters for Presubmission Abstracts are set out immediately below.

Quantitative Research. Presubmission abstracts (no more than 220 words)

Please use the following headings: *Purpose, Design, Setting, Subjects, Intervention* (if appropriate), *Measures, Analysis, Results, Conclusion*

Qualitative Research. Presubmission abstracts (no more than 220 words)

Please use the following headings: *Purpose, Approach or Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention* (if appropriate), *Method* (data collection and analysis strategies), *Results, Conclusion*

Applied Research Brief. Presubmission abstracts (no more than 220 words)

Please use the following headings: *Purpose, Design, Setting, Subjects, Intervention* (if appropriate), *Measures, Analysis, Results, Conclusion*

Literature Review. Presubmission abstracts (no more than 220 words)

Please use the following headings: *Objective, Data Source, Study Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria, Data Extraction, Data Synthesis, Results, Conclusion*

Critical Issues and Trends. Presubmission abstracts (no more than 100 words)

Please submit an unstructured *Synopsis* for this manuscript type.

Review Process and Criteria for Acceptance

Authors are encouraged to request copies of the Editorial Review Forms appropriate to their manuscript type before preparing and submitting the manuscript. These are not published in the *Journal* but can be requested from the editorial office by e-mail (blindeen@allenpress.com).

The initial review process normally takes 3 months. Reviews of subsequent revisions take about 2 months. Acknowledgment of articles received is sent to authors once the editor has decided to send the manuscript out for review.

External reviews of all manuscripts, except Critical Issues and Trends, are blind and anonymous. Internal reviews of manuscripts by the Editor are not blind or anonymous. Manuscripts are reviewed by three reviewers who include a subject matter expert, a practitioner, and a research methodologist, as appropriate. Reviewers consider the following criteria: relevance and importance to practice or research, scientific quality, presentation quality, and conformity to format guidelines.

Manuscripts are reviewed with the understanding that they have not been previously published and are not under consideration by another publication.¹ A complete report after publication of preliminary findings elsewhere is normally acceptable. Copies of preliminary reports and duplicative materials published elsewhere or being considered by other publications should be submitted with the manuscript and referred to in the cover letter.

Authorship Requirements

Each author should have participated sufficiently in the work to take public responsibility for appropriate portions of the content. One or more authors should take responsibility for the integrity of the work as a whole, from inception to published article.

Authorship credit should be based only on (1) substantial contributions to conception and design, or acquisition of data, or analysis and interpretation of data; and (2) drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content; and (3) final approval of the version to be published. Conditions (1), (2), and (3) must all be met.² Authors are required to identify their contributions to the work described in the manuscript.

If authorship is attributed to a group (either solely or in addition to one or more individual authors), all members of the group must meet the full criteria and requirements for authorship as described above. A group must designate one or more individuals as authors or members of a writing group who meet full authorship criteria and requirements and who will take responsibility for the group. Other group members who are not authors may be listed in an Acknowledgment.²

Cover Letter

In a separate document, submit a cover letter that includes the following information:

- An explanation of how the paper is innovative, provocative, timely, and of interest to a broad audience.
- A list of any papers on related topics by any of the authors that have been published within the past year or that are in review or in press.
- For multi-authored papers, a statement that all the authors have made substantial contributions (a) to either conception and design or else analysis and interpretation of data, and (b) to drafting the article or revising it critically for important intellectual content, and (c) on final approval of the version to be published and agree to its submission.
- A statement of financial or other relationships that may lead to a conflict of interest. (Consult Section II.D of “Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals.”¹)
- A statement that written permission was obtained from individuals cited in the Acknowledgments section, if appropriate (attach permission letters to the cover letter).
- A statement that, if the manuscript includes a personal communication, you have obtained permission to cite it and have confirmed the accuracy of the information from the source of the personal communication (attach permission letter and confirmation to the cover letter).

Publicity for Articles: Press Releases and Webinars

In an effort to maximize the visibility of published articles, we send press releases to major media outlets. This sometimes results in media interviews with the author and coverage in the popular media. We also offer free bimonthly webinars that feature authors of selected articles from each issue. These webinars are also posted on our Web site. Authors invited to participate in these webinars are asked to prepare a short Powerpoint presentation to describe their methodology and findings.

Format and Style of Manuscript

General Instructions

Manuscripts should be prepared in accordance with the *American Medical Association Manual of Style*³ and/or the “Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals.”¹ Use the

following guidelines when preparing your manuscript for submission. Refer also to the additional guidelines specific to each type of manuscript. These are described in the section “Instructions for Specific Types of Manuscripts.”

Manuscript Submission Format

When submitting your full manuscript you will first see the Manuscript Data form, where you can update or replace any author or manuscript information. Then you will be asked to upload your files.

To facilitate the blind and anonymous review process, the submitted manuscript should include the following files: 1) Title Page file; 2) Blinded Article file; 3) Figure files (if figures are included, each should be in a separate file); 4) Cover Letter file; and 5) Acknowledgment Permission file if needed (as a second Cover Letter).

1. Submit the **Title Page** file with the following information:
 - Title of the article
 - Running head (no more than 50 characters including spaces)
 - Author information
 - First name, middle name or initial(s), and last name
 - Degree designations (e.g., MS, PhD)
 - Affiliation, including the department, at the time the work was done
 - Mailing address, work telephone and fax numbers, and e-mail address
 - Acknowledgments (if any; the name(s) of author(s) and others listed in the acknowledgments should not appear elsewhere in the manuscript excluding the references section)
2. Submit the **Blinded Article** file with the parts in the following order:
 - Title
 - Outline
 - Structured Abstract (Synopsis not required for Critical Issues and Trends papers)
 - Key Words
 - Indexing Key Words
 - Text
 - SO WHAT? section (except for Critical Issues and Trends papers)
 - References
 - Figure Captions
 - Tables with Captions (place each table on a separate page at the end of the Blinded Article file)
3. Submit the **Figure** files
 - One figure per file

Outline. Prepare an outline of the manuscript showing all main headings and subheadings. At the bottom, include separate word counts for the abstract and the text (do not include references, tables, figures, or captions in the count).

Structured Abstract or Synopsis. The maximum number of words allowed depends on the manuscript type. (See “Instructions for Specific Types of Manuscripts” below.) Do not cite references in the abstract.

Key Words. Provide 4 to 6 key words or short phrases, using terms from the Medical Subject Headings list of Index Medicus whenever possible (<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/mesh/meshhome.html>).

Indexing Key Words. Indexing key words help readers effectively search editorial indexes of our published manuscripts. Select appropriate key word(s) for each of the 9 factors below and list in the order shown (e.g., Manuscript format: research; Research purpose: program evaluation, etc.).

1. Manuscript format: (editorial/commentary/concept, literature review, research)

For research articles

2. Research purpose: (instrument development, intervention testing/program evaluation, modeling/relationship testing, descriptive)
 3. Study design: (randomized trial, quasi-experimental, non-experimental, qualitative, content analysis)
 4. Outcome measure: (cognitive, behavioral, biometric, morbidity, mortality, productivity, absenteeism, other financial/economic)
- Content focus*
5. Setting: (family, workplace, school, clinical/health care, local community, state/national)
 6. Health focus: (fitness/physical activity, intellectual health, medical self care, nutrition, smoking control, social health, spiritual health, stress management, weight control)
 7. Strategy: (education, skill building/behavior change, incentives, policy, culture change, built environment)
 8. Target population age: (youth, adults, seniors)
 9. Target population circumstances (specify all that apply): education/income level, geographic location, and race/ethnicity

Text Format

Manuscripts must be submitted as Microsoft Word or .doc files using 12-point Times New Roman font, double-spaced with 1-inch margins on all sides. Leave the right-hand margin ragged (unjustified) and number pages in numerical order.

Ensure that main headings and subheadings correspond directly to headings in the outline. Report *p* values as precisely as possible, rather than automatically rounding them to the .05 or .01 level.

Ethical Requirements

For experimental investigations of human subjects, state in the Methods section that an appropriate institutional review board approved the project.^{3(p140)} For those investigators who do not have formal ethics review committees, the principles outlined in the Declaration of Helsinki should be followed.⁴ For investigations of human subjects, state in the Sample part of the Methods section the manner in which informed consent was obtained from the study participants.

SO WHAT?

For Quantitative Research, Qualitative Research, Applied Research Briefs, and Systematic Literature Review manuscripts, please prepare a 100–150 word summary of the contribution of the article to the literature. Organize your comments into three paragraphs underneath the headings listed below. Consider the magnitude and methodological quality of the existing literature and the methodological quality of your research in composing comments.

SO WHAT? Implications for Health Promotion Practitioners and Researchers

What is already known on this topic?

Text, text, text...

What does this article add?

Text, text, text...

What are the implications for health promotion practice or research?

Text, text, text...

Acknowledgments (if applicable)

Written permission must be obtained from each person cited in the Acknowledgments section. Submit the permission letter(s) with the cover letter.

References

Authors are responsible for the accuracy of their references and for their correct citation in the text. Number references in the order in which they are cited in the text. Use superscript Arabic numerals when citing references. Begin the list of references on a separate page. References should be formatted in the American Medical Association (AMA) style.³ Give the complete URL and the date accessed when citing online addresses. Please also note the following:

- Authors who use automatic bibliographic software must convert the bibliographic software’s reference style to the Journal style and delete any embedded links between the citation numbers and the references.
- For standard journal articles, list up to 6 authors; for 7 or more authors, list only the first 3 authors and add “et al.”
- Abbreviate journal titles according to the Index Medicus style (www.nlm.nih.gov/tsd/serials/lji.html).

Examples of reference style:

1. Shegog R, McAlister AL, Hu S, Ford KC, Meshack AF, Peters RJ. Use of interactive health communication to affect smoking intentions in middle school students: a pilot test of the “Headbutt” risk assessment program. *Am J Health Promot.* 2005;19:334–338.
2. O’Donnell MP. *Health Promotion in the Workplace.* Albany, NY: Delmar; 2002.
3. Wilbur CS, Garner D. Marketing health to employees: the Johnson and Johnson Live for Life Program. In: Frederiksen LW, Soloman LJ, Brehony KA, eds. *Marketing Health Behavior: Principles, Techniques, and Applications.* New York: Plenum Press; 1984:137–163.
4. Lewis MA. *The Prevalence of HIV and AIDS Workplace Policies* [dissertation]. Newcastle, New South Wales, Australia: University of Newcastle; 1996.
5. US Bureau of the Census. *American Fact Finder, 2000.* Available at: <http://www.census.gov>. Accessed March 24, 2002.

Manuscripts that have been accepted but not published may be included; provide the journal name followed by “in press.” Do not include “personal communications” in the list of references. Rather, insert them within the text, using the following style: A written survey was administered to adults by trained, college-aged interviewers (Dr. Patrick O’Malley, personal communication, April 2005).

Tables and Figures

Depending on manuscript type, up to six tables and figures are allowed. Figures may be graphs, charts, photos, etc., but all should be called figures. Each table and figure should be called out in numerical order within the text.

Tables. Tables should supplement, not duplicate, the text. Prepare table files in Excel or Word format. Number tables in the order in which they are mentioned in the text. Place each table on a separate page and use appropriate page orientation (portrait or landscape). Explain in footnotes all non-standard abbreviations used in each table. Indicate table footnotes with symbols, shown in the following order: *, †, ‡, §, ||, #, **, ††, ‡‡, etc. When *p* values are reported, use the asterisk (*) for the *p* values and begin the list of footnotes with the † symbol.

Figures. Prepare figures in PDF, PPT, XLS, TIFF, JPEG, or DOC format. Consult the table below for guidance on minimum and ideal figure resolutions. Save each figure in a separate file (i.e., if there are 5 figures in the manuscript, 5 figure files should be submitted along with the text file). Place figure captions, double-spaced, after the references.

Kind of figure	File mode	Ideal resolution	Minimum resolution
Line (175L b/w)	Bitmap	1200 ppi*	600 ppi
Halftone (300L b/w)	Grayscale	350 ppi	200 ppi
Halftone (Line// Halftone)	Grayscale	450 ppi	200 ppi

* ppi indicates pixels per inch.

File Size. Files larger than 5 MB may cause problems for editors and reviewers. If any of your files are greater than 5 MB, please contact the AllenTrack support team (support@allentrack.net) before submitting your files.

Instructions for Specific Types of Manuscripts

Quantitative Research

Review Criteria. Evaluated based on relevance, the quality of the design and execution of the study, and the quality of the reporting of the study.

Abstract. An abstract of no more than 220 words should be divided into the following headings: *Purpose, Design, Setting, Subjects, Intervention* (if appropriate), *Measures, Analysis, Results,* and *Conclusion.* Include sample sizes, response rate, statistical tests used, primary results in quantitative form, and critical limitations.

Key Words and Indexing Key Words. Immediately follow Abstract.

Length. 12 to 18 double-spaced typed pages, or about 3000 to 4500 words. Avoid preparing articles longer than 5000 words, except in unusual situations.

Text Format. Include the following headings and subheadings: Purpose, Methods (Design, Sample, Measures, Intervention [if appropriate], and Analysis), Results, Discussion, and SO WHAT?

Qualitative Research

Review Criteria. Evaluated based on relevance, the quality of the design and execution of the study, and the quality of the reporting of the study.

Abstract. An abstract of no more than 220 words should be divided into the following headings: *Purpose, Approach or Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention* (if appropriate), *Method* (data collection and analysis strategies), *Results,* and *Conclusion.* Describe and justify the qualitative methodology chosen, the context of the study and the role of the researcher, criteria for the selection of participants, informants or materials, sample size, recruitment methods and non-participation, data collection procedures and the decision to end data collection, data analysis techniques, the credibility and transferability of findings, and critical limitations.

Key Words and Indexing Key Words. Immediately follow Abstract.

Length. 12 to 18 double-spaced typed pages, or about 3000 to 4500 words. Avoid preparing articles longer than 5000 words, except in unusual situations.

Text Format. Purpose, Approach or Design, Setting, Participants, Intervention (if appropriate), Method (data collection and analysis strategies), Results, Conclusion, and SO WHAT?

Systematic Literature Reviews

Review Criteria. Evaluated based on relevance, scope and design of the review process, accuracy and astuteness in recognizing trends, and presentation quality of the review.

Abstract. An abstract of no more than 220 words should be divided into the following headings: *Objective, Data Source, Study Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria, Data Extraction, Data Synthesis, Results,* and *Conclusions.*

Key Words and Indexing Key Words. Immediately follow Abstract.

Length. 12 to 18 double-spaced typed pages, or about 3000 to 4500 words. Avoid preparing articles longer than 5000 words.

Text Format. Include the following headings and subheadings: Objective, Methods (Data Sources, Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria, Data Extraction, and Data Synthesis), Results, Conclusions, and SO WHAT?

Critical Issues and Trends

Types of Articles. Articles published in this section describe events and constructs that are having or will have a major impact on health promotion practice or research. Articles might describe important legislation, research breakthroughs, emerging trends, paradigm shifts, emerging policy, or a wide range of other topics.

Selection Criteria. The following criteria are considered in the review process: overall importance (A topic of critical importance to the field of health promotion is addressed; the topic is of interest to readers; and the author has sufficient credentials to be perceived as credible) and presentation quality (Length is within the Instructions to Authors guidelines; the writing is clear; the structure and organization are clear; and sufficient documentation of controversial claims is presented).

Synopsis. No more than 100 words. The Synopsis is used at Presubmission Inquiry and in the manuscript data form but is not published as part of the paper.

Length. No more than 1600 words, including up to 15 references. Figures and Tables are not encouraged; if included, the number of words in the body of the article must be reduced to account for the space consumed by these items. To determine a table's word count equivalent, multiply the number of columns by the number of rows by 10. Subtract this number from the allowed 1600 words. For example, if a table has 4 rows and 8 columns, the table equals approximately 320 words, leaving 1280 words available for the rest of the article. Authors should use their best judgment to estimate the number of word spaces consumed by figures. Critical Issues and Trends that exceed three typeset pages will be published online only.

Text Format. At the author's discretion.

Note. The author's identity for articles in this format is not blinded for the review process.

Applied Research Briefs

Types of Articles. Applied Research Briefs are designed to provide readers with pertinent research findings in a condensed format. These include original studies that are not appropriate for full-length manuscripts but that are relevant to the practice of health promotion. These articles highlight work that can influence how, where, when, what, and for whom health promotion services are provided. The study findings should be succinct and focused and provide a clear message about how they apply to the practitioner. The Applied Research Brief format is appropriate for studies that fall into the following categories: preliminary studies; simple comparisons between two or more program alternatives; and studies that have methodologic flaws, such as small sample sizes or lack of a control group, yet convey important findings.

Review Criteria. The review process similar to but less rigorous than that for Quantitative Research and Qualitative Research manuscripts. All external reviews are blind and anonymous. For acceptance, the manuscript should address an important issue, be

of interest to practitioners, illustrate good research in a practice setting, clearly describe the implications of methodological limitations, be well written and presented, and be within length guidelines.

Abstract. An abstract of no more than 220 words should be divided into the following headings: *Purpose, Design, Setting, Subjects, Intervention* (if appropriate), *Measures, Analysis, Results*, and *Conclusion*. Include sample sizes, response rate, statistical tests used, primary results in quantitative form, and critical limitations.

Key Words and Indexing Key Words. Immediately follow Abstract.

Length. No more than 1800 words of text including the abstract, references, and tables. Please limit these manuscripts to no more than 15 references and two tables or figures. To determine a table's word count equivalent, multiply the number of columns by the number of rows by 10. Subtract this number from the allowed 1800 words. For example, if a table has 4 rows and 8 columns, the table equals approximately 320 words, leaving 1480 words available for the rest of the article. Authors should use their best judgment to estimate the number of word spaces consumed by figures. Applied Research Briefs that exceed three typeset pages will be published online only.

Text Format. Include the following headings, subheadings, and word counts: Purpose (100 to 200 words), Methods (250 to 600 words: Design, Sample, Measures, Intervention [if appropriate], and Analysis), Results (250 to 550 words), Discussion (250 to 450 words: Summary, Limitations, Significance), and SO WHAT?

References

1. International Committee of Medical Journal Editors. Uniform Requirements for Manuscripts Submitted to Biomedical Journals: Writing and Editing for Biomedical Publication. Updated October 2004. Available at: <http://www.ICMJE.org>. Accessed July 15, 2005.
2. Flanagan A, Fontanarosa PB, DeAngelis CD. Authorship for research groups. *JAMA*. 2002;288:3166–3168.
3. Iverson C, Flanagan A, Fontanarosa PB, et al. American Medical Association Manual of Style: A Guide for Authors and Editors. 9th ed. Baltimore, Md: Williams & Wilkins; 1998:28–51.
4. The World Medical Association, Inc. Declaration of Helsinki: Ethical Principles for Medical Research Involving Human Subjects. Updated 2004. Available at: <http://www.wma.net>. Accessed July 15, 2005.

Last updated June 22, 2012.

American Journal of Health Promotion Manuscript Checklist

Please use this checklist as a guideline for submitting a complete manuscript and cover letter. A copy of this checklist can be downloaded from the AllenTrack website at (<http://ajhp.allentrack.net>).

- The *American Journal of Health Promotion* is the only journal to which this manuscript (or one with essentially the same content) has been submitted.
- The cover letter contains the contact author's name, mailing address, e-mail address, phone and fax numbers; and financial disclosure.
- A manuscript outline of main headings and subheadings is included.
- The title page shows all author and coauthor names, degrees, affiliations, mailing addresses, e-mail address, and phone and fax numbers; disclaimer, if any; a short running head; and any Acknowledgments.
- Permission has been obtained from individuals mentioned in the Acknowledgment section and included in the submission as a second cover letter.
- All names and other identifiers have been removed from the manuscript, including any headers, footers, and acknowledgments. Identifiers—including acknowledgments, which can be reinserted if the manuscript is accepted—should only appear on the title page, which should be uploaded separately from the article.
- The manuscript is of the following type (check one):
 - Quantitative Research
 - Qualitative Research
 - Systematic Literature Review
 - Critical Issues and Trends
 - Applied Research Brief
- The Abstract is formatted correctly and meets the word count requirement for this type of manuscript.
- The Key Word list and Indexing Key Word list are included following the Abstract.
- All pages are double-spaced, numbered, and contain line numbers in the left-hand margin.
- The SO WHAT? section is included, if appropriate.
- Tables are typed on separate pages at the end of the manuscript and are numbered consecutively. Tables are cited in the text in chronological order (i.e., Table 1, Table 2, etc.).
- Figures are in separate files. Figure captions need to be listed on the last text page of the manuscript (without the images).
- References are formatted according to the American Medical Association style and numbered.
- Copyright permission has been obtained for the use of previously published tables, figures, and illustrations.